United Nations A/60/301

General Assembly

Distr.: General
24 August 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Item 73 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Human rights questions: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General submits the present report in response to General Assembly resolution 59/184 in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek further the views of Member States and relevant United Nations agencies on this issue and to submit a substantive report on this subject to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. The report summarizes replies received in response to a request for information sent pursuant to the resolution. Responses were received from the Governments of Georgia, Iraq, Mexico and Oman.

* A/60/150.

05-47283 (E) 130905

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 59/184, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights (A/59/320) and requested the Secretary-General to seek further the views of Member States and relevant United Nations agencies and to submit a substantive report on this subject to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 1 June 2005, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) sent a request for views on this issue. As of 24 August 2005, OHCHR had received responses from the Governments of Georgia, Iraq, Mexico and Oman.

II. Replies received from Governments

Georgia

[Original: English]
[7 July 2005]

The Government of Georgia stated that in its opinion, resolution 59/184 was of particular importance to transitional and developing countries. At the current stage, one of the principal tasks of the Georgian authorities was to ensure sustainable economic growth, poverty alleviation, and achievement of the objectives of international development within the process of globalization. At the same time, the Government noted that it agreed that, as stated in the resolution, globalization was a diversified phenomenon and that the full realization of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights called for special attention and deep analysis in this context.

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[6 July 2005]

The Government of Iraq stated that globalization carried many implications — social, political, cultural and legal — which affected the full enjoyment of human rights to varying degrees from country to country. Consequently, globalization could have both positive and negative effects on human rights.

For example, globalization has provided many opportunities as a result of scientific advancement and economic development and greater competition. However, the distribution of benefits from globalization is extremely uneven between and within countries, and this has led to negative effects on human rights. Significantly, attempts to bridge the gaps between developed and developing countries have not so far been successful and this has affected the full enjoyment of human rights in developing countries, especially in relation to the fight against poverty and the right to a safe and healthy environment.

Consequently, the implementation of the policies of globalization should be based on human rights principles such as equality, participation, accountability, non-discrimination and respect for diversity, tolerance and international cooperation.

The new Iraq was striving to catch up with economically developed countries through the liberalization of trade by fostering privatization and by seeking the latest production and communications technologies, while at the same time taking into account the effects of policies on the enjoyment of human rights and attempting to overcome obstacles to the enjoyment of rights, in particular economic, social and cultural rights.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[29 July 2005]

The Government of Mexico stated that the most significant challenge confronting the international community is the spread of the benefits of globalization to everyone on the planet. Globalization had great potential to improve the standard of living in all countries and to lead to more just and equitable societies; however, the benefits of globalization were enjoyed unequally. Part of the reason was a lack of coherence between systems of international trade and finance and national development strategies. Ideally, globalization should be a just, integrated and democratic process which offered opportunities and benefits to everyone in all countries.

The Government of Mexico has introduced several social programmes to eradicate poverty and to provide the best opportunities for development to the people. In particular, the Government has adopted the *Estrategia Contigo*, a project based in the principles of equity, transparency, co-responsibility, cohesion and integrity which has sought to advance development policies that strengthened capacities and options for the development of individuals and communities, in accordance with their needs and aspirations. In particular, the Government recognized the need to attend to the needs of those who are socially disadvantaged or vulnerable as one of the conditions for improving the development and prosperity of the country.

Importantly, recent statistics on poverty indicated that Mexico had made satisfactory progress in the reduction of poverty. For example, between 2000 and 2004, 5.6 million people had progressed from a state of food poverty, moving beyond the minimum level of food and nutritional intake established by the National Institute for Statistics, Geography and Information and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

In relation to the protection of migrants, the National Human Rights Commission had created the Quinta Visitaduría General, which began work on 1 January 2005. Its mandate includes the *Programa de Atención a Migrantes* (which considered petitions related to the phenomenon of migration) and the strengthening of collaborative mechanisms with federal and local authorities working on migration, public human rights organs and non-governmental organizations. One of the principle objectives is to undertake supervisory visits to migration stations and migration checkpoints with a view to prevent the commission of human rights

violations against migrants detained in these sites. The Quinta Visitaduría General has established seven regional offices which included mobile offices intended to receive petitions and other support.

The National Human Rights Commission also recognized the importance of respect for cultural diversity in the country, particularly for indigenous peoples, through programmes aimed at combating discrimination. To this end, the Commission had established the *Programa de Asuntos Indígenas* which receives, transmits and examines petitions from indigenous peoples in relation to alleged violations of human rights, in particular relating to the protection of languages, cultures, customs, resources, religious and spiritual practices and specific forms of social organization.

With regard to the negative effects of financial crises on social and economic development, the National Human Rights Commission has recognized their destabilizing effects on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, the enjoyment of which represents the only way to eradicate inequalities that currently exist in Mexico. One example in this area has been the increase in the number and seriousness of complaints in relation to ineffective provision of health services. The provision of sufficient finance to these and other services would be essential to reverse such deterioration.

Oman

[Original: English]
[11 August 2005]

The Government of Oman noted that it, as other countries, was affected by globalization. Globalization affected people's commercial rights either as producers, exporters or consumers, as well as their relations with each other. Since opting for a market economy, Oman has abided by its commitments and has promulgated and enacted required laws, regulations and acts that are necessary to protect health and the environment. Oman has also legislated with a view to combating illegal commercial practices such as brand copying and fraud on a non-discriminatory basis.

The laws and statutes of Oman seek to uphold intellectual property rights. Oman has also enacted laws to protect consumers from commercial fraud, imitation products and deceit. The State's various standards and specifications and other technical regulations have provided for adequate protection for public health and safety, in conformity with the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization.